# DRAFTING LICENSE AGREEMENTS

### **Fourth Edition**

Volume 2

Michael A. Epstein Frank L. Politano Editors



2011-2 SUPPLEMENT

#### Case 2::10-cv-01823-JLR Document 8789-3 Filibed090285/112 Figure 25 of 27

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#### 2011-2 SUPPLEMENT

Also, premium pricing and the rate of return must be taken into consideration. In addition, to determine the length of the future income stream, the economic remaining life must be determined.

#### [c] Disadvantages

There are disadvantages with this method also. Most notably, it is extremely difficult to predict what benefits will be derived in the future. This is tied to the difficulty in trying to determine the economic life. Another disadvantage is the difficulty inherent in trying to select an accurate discount rate. If the chosen discount rate is too high or too low, the determined value of the property may be noticeably inaccurate.

#### [4] Combination of Approaches

There is no one best approach that can be relied upon to provide a single valuation for patented assets. A blend is preferred, but in what proportion? And the presence, absence, and degree of exclusivity associated with intangible intellectual property make valuation even more difficult.<sup>58</sup>

#### § 20.05 METHODS OF MEASURING ROYALTY RATES

Once a method of valuation has been determined and applied to the intellectual property, a basis for measuring the royalty rate must also be determined. Typically, the royalty rate is based on a percentage of either the sales or profits of the product that is the subject of the license agreement. In addition, the royalty rate may be determined on a per-unit basis. These methods of measuring the royalty rate are discussed in more detail below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Some useful references include:

G.V. Smith, & R.L. Parr, Intellectual Property: Valuation, Exploitation and Infringement Damages, J. Wiley & Sons, New York, 2005.

R. Goldscheider, Licensing and the Art of Technology Management, West Publishing, New York, 2007.

P.B. Bell, & J. Simon, *The Law And Business of Licensing*, Clark, Boardman, Callaghan, New York, 1997.

M.B. Finnegan, & R. Goldscheider, *The Law And Business of Licensing*, Clark Boardman Company, New York, 1980.

#### [A] Gross or Net Sales

To reiterate the comparison provided in Section 1, gross sales are the total of all sales at invoice prices, whereas net sales are gross sales minus returns, allowances, rebates, and discounts. Net sales can also exclude sales taxes, installation, freight and packing expenses, and other expenses. <sup>59</sup>

Gross sales and net sales are favored by licensors because they are relatively easy to measure, relatively hard to manipulate, and account for increases due to inflation. Licensees also prefer basing the royalty rate on gross or net sales because it allows proper accounting to the licensor without having to disclose profit information. For these reasons, the majority of licenses use sales as the royalty rate base, with net sales predominating because they allow deductions for certain expenses that are not related to the protected technology.

One method that uses net sales as the basis for measuring royalty rates is the "5% of Sales Method." As is obvious from its name, the "5% of Sales Method" bases the royalty rate on 5% of the net sales. The major disadvantage of the "5% of Sales Method" is that it does not take into account other financial considerations, the scope of the license grant, the risk associated with licensing the intellectual property, the capital investment necessary to implement the intellectual property, profits, manufacturing expenses, and operating expenses. Therefore, although this method may be used as a baseline, most negotiated royalty rates actually fall between 1% and 5% of the net sales.

#### [B] Profits

Another method of measuring the royalty rate is to use the profits resulting from the sale of the licensed product. Gross profit is determined by subtracting from gross sales the cost of the goods sold, which generally includes directly allocable expenses, such as manufacturing expenses, raw material costs, direct labor costs, utility expenses, and depreciation expenses for the manufacturing facility.<sup>60</sup>

One problem with the gross profits method is that operating expenses are not considered. Typical operating expenses include sales expenses, advertising, administrative costs, rent, basic utilities, and other expenses needed to keep the business running but that are not directly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> See 1 Harold Einhorn, Patent Licensing Transactions § 3.04[3] (1997).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> Russell L. Parr & Gregory J. Battersby, 1999 Licensing Update, Aspen Publishers, Inc., *Chapter 8: Royalty Rate Trends*, p. 224 (1999).

# DRAFTING PATENT LICENSE AGREEMENTS

Fifth Edition

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may be negotiable. In some markets where risk and reward are high, such as pharmaceuticals, royalty rates of 10% to 30%, along

with substantial milestone payments, may be tolerated. In a very

few instances, as where the use of the invention (perhaps a new

and important catalyst) contributes extremely large added value to

the products in which it is used, royalties as high as 50 percent (measured on the selling price of the catalyst or similar value-adding

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#### 10.01 Selection and Definition of the Royalty Base

constituent) can be justified and will be found acceptable.

Contract drafting in respect to royalty payments divides itself rather naturally into (1) the problem of defining the base on which royalties are to be computed and (2) the procedures under which royalties payable are to be calculated, reported, and accounted for. It ordinarily works well to treat these two matters separately, focusing one part of the agreement on each. Accordingly, the following sections will outline an approach suitable to this course.

#### A. Selecting the Royalty Base

Selection of the royalty base is the first step in negotiating license consideration. Varying the royalty rate to achieve a desired total consideration is relatively easy once the royalty base is determined. The ideal royalty base should have two fundamental characteristics: it should relate directly to the licensee's use of the licensed rights and it should be amenable to reliable accounting and auditing.

The first desired characteristic of a royalty base, relation to use of the licensed technology, reflects a logical connection between the benefit given to the licensee and the amount paid by the lic-

The second desired characteristic is more practical than logical. Payment of royalties generally requires reliance on the licensee to determine, in accordance with the terms of the license, what royalties are payable. This determination is considerably easier, and more likely to be correctly calculated, if the royalty base is something already counted or recorded in the ordinary course of business of the licensee. A licensee normally uses and retains invoices that show the sales price of products or normally counts the number of products made or sold. A licensee, on the other hand, may not normally count the number of cycles of a machine, for example. Selection of an unusual royalty base, even though it may be directly related to use of the licensed technology, can lead to errors in royalty calculation by the licensee and to increased costs to the licensee in creating a separate record and to the licensor in auditing records that may deviate from accepted accounting principles. 10.01

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§10.01.B.1 Royalties, Reports, and Payments

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Mention of accounting principles suggests another factor to consider in selecting a royalty base. A licensee's profit on a licensed product or the licensee's cost of the licensed product are both tempting bases, since each has some direct relation to the licensee's use of the licensed technology. Before selecting such a base, however, the licensor should consider the variable definitions for profit and cost under generally accepted accounting principles, and the licensee should consider whether it wishes to disclose to the licensor its profit or cost figures. If such a royalty base is to be used, care should be taken to define, to the extent reasonable and possible given principles of accounting, exactly what profit or cost the parties contemplate.

Where the licensed technology involves a product or process that uses or consumes a raw material, an attractive royalty base is the cost of that raw material. Such a base is directly related to the licensee's use of the technology, and such costs are ordinarily kept by the licensee in the ordinary course of business. Before selecting such a base, however, the parties should consider potential fluctuations of the price for the raw material that may have nothing to do with the market for the licensed product. Licensees who agreed in the early 1970s to pay royalties on the cost of oil input to licensed refining processes were unpleasantly surprised when OPEC caused dramatic increases in the price of oil.

The most common royalty bases are the sales price (net or gross) of the licensed product or a fixed amount for each licensed product sold or manufactured.

#### B. Defining the Royalty Base

Inadequate or ambiguous definition of the royalty base has, over the years, engendered much litigation. In the litigated cases, there appear to be two principal sources of controversy: (1) vagueness as to the general subject matter intended to bear royalties and (2) uncertainty concerning intended peripheral metes and bounds of royalty-bearing subject matter otherwise reasonably identified.

#### 1. Vagueness as to Subject Matter

The problem of vagueness is well illustrated by *Heath v. A.B.* Dick Co. 10 and Muth v. J.W. Speaker Corp. 11

In the *Heath* case, the commitment was to pay royalties of "ten cents (10¢) per pound of the film material used in the stencilization of stencil sheets *under this license.*" 12 This followed an agreement

<sup>10253</sup> F.2d 30, 116 USPQ 358 (7th Cir. 1958).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>151 F. Supp. 188, 114 USPQ 327 (D. Wis. 1957).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>253 F.2d at 32, 116 USPQ at 359 (emphasis added).

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#### Case 2:10-cy-01823-11 R. Document 480-3. Filed 10/15/12. Page 13 of 16

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discrimination.

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#### Case 2:10-cv-01823-JLR Document 480-3 Filed 10/15/12 Page 14 of 16

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#### F. APPLICATION TO AFFILIATES: Document 480-3 Filed 10/15/12 Page 15 of 16

With respect to any Essential Patent Claims that an Affiliate has the ability to license, the Submitter agrees that (i) the licensing positions described in parts C and D above apply to any Essential Patent Claims within the scope of the assurance described in part E; and (ii) the terms of this assurance are binding on each such Affiliate; provided, however, that such representations and commitments shall not apply to Affiliates identified below:

Organization's Name	Organization's Name
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Contact person	Contact person

For additional Affiliates, use additional pages as necessary.

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Print name of authorized person:	
Title of authorized person:	
Signature of authorized person:	Date:
Address:	
Phone:	E-mail:

Note: This assurance applies from the date of the standard's approval to the date of the standard's transfer to inactive status and is irrevocable upon acceptance by the IEEE-SA.

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#### **DEFINITIONS**2:10-cv-01823-JLR Document 480-3 Filed 10/15/12 Page 16 of 16

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